

**REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY FOR TRADE FACILITATION**



**ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2019**

**Belgrade, March 2020**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation (hereinafter: NTFB) was established by the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia<sup>1</sup> in November 2017. This body was established to ensure comprehensive and effective facilitation of foreign trade of the Republic of Serbia and to coordinate efforts by the competent authorities, organisations, business community and other participants in the foreign trade system.

Stevan Nikčević, the State Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications is the **Chairman of the National Coordination Body**. At the proposal that the Customs Administration put forward in February this year, current **Vice-Chair**, Veselin Milošević will be replaced by Dušan Marinković, Acting Assistant Director – Coordinator of the Customs Administration in the Ministry of Finance.

Expert and administrative and technical support to the National Coordination Body **is provided by the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications in cooperation with the Customs Administration.**

The National Coordination Body submits to the Government regular annual reports on their work by March 31 of the current year at the latest for the previous year and, whenever necessary, the extraordinary reports. Based on this obligation, the Report for 2018 **was delivered to the Government for information purposes on March 22, 2019 under number 337-00-00061/2018-10; the Report covered the period from March 2018 to March 2019.**

In the said document, the following activities were planned to be carried out during the reporting period: efforts aimed at fulfilling the obligations laid down in Action Plans for 2018 and 2019; drawing up of new Action Plans for 2020 and 2021, as well as fulfilling of obligations arising from the implementation of CEFTA Additional Protocol 5. **It can be concluded that practically all the objectives set have been fulfilled to a substantial degree, as presented in detail in this Report, which covers the activities realized from March 2019 until March 2020.**

Progress achieved in Serbia based on the activities realized within the NTFB was recognized by the international organisations as well. Thus, according to the assessment from the **Third UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation for 2019**, the trade facilitation measures in Serbia were fulfilled to 61.29%, which is a significant positive achievement compared to the previous reports according to which this assessment was significantly lower (the result for 2015 was 36.56%, and the result for 2017 was 38.71%). The Global Survey is published biannually and it includes the survey of 128 economies throughout the world that comprises of an analysis of the implementation of 53 measures relating to the implementation of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement. Serbian progress has been recognized in the **World Bank Tracking Tool**, which tracks and monitors the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement for individual countries, where Serbian alignment in 2018 rose to 78% compared to 65% in 2014.

## 2. REPORT ON ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY NTFB EXPERT WORKING GROUPS

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<sup>1</sup> Official Gazette of the RS, number 98/17 and 55/2019

In accordance with Article 4 of the Decision on Establishing the National Coordination Body, four expert working groups were formed to carry out the NTFB activities. The expert working groups consider individual issues and participate in proposing solutions with the aim of facilitating foreign trade, removing barriers to trade, streamlining and modernizing customs procedures and carrying out of import, export and transit controls, simplifying processes and reducing formalities, with active participation and presence of interested members from the business community, Chambers and other Associations, other holders of public powers, representatives of scientific and educational institutions, as well as other organisations capable of impacting facilitation of foreign trade.

In January 2020, the NTFB adopted a new Decision on Establishing Expert Working Groups, based on the previously adopted amendment to the Decision on Establishing the NTFB. In the Decision dated January 15, 2020, the list of members of all the Expert Working Groups was consolidated, to include the latest changes both among the public authorities, and from the private sector, with the inclusion of representatives of the National Alliance for Local Development (NALED) among the members of the first Expert Working Group.

### **2.1. Report on completed activities of the Expert Working Groups relating to fulfilment of obligations contained in the Action Plans for 2018 and 2019**

## **I – EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR AGRICULTURE, SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

**Chairperson: Milanka Davidović**, Department Head, from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

1. Activities undertaken to reduce the time required to complete the import procedures and to establish an efficient risk analysis system according to the Action Plan are interrelated. Intensive efforts were made to analyse all aspects impacting operations of competent inspections during border controls and the duration of these controls.

Experiences and views were exchanged among competent services and representatives of the business community. Focus was on the goods with shorter expiration dates, the so-called perishable goods, primarily on fruits and vegetable.

Work of inspection services on the border crossing Preševo has been improved – through introduction of 24/7 working hours, and an initiative was addressed to the Government relating to other border crossings, primarily to Horgoš, concerning introduction of working hours of 24 hours a day.

At the initiative and with the assistance from the business community (AmCham), a French expert was hired to perform an analysis of the entire border crossings' control system for shipments of agricultural and food products and to prepare a proposal for improvements, i.e. establishing of an efficient risk analysis system by all the inspection services. In May 2019, the hired expert presented the report and proposed a risk analysis model adjusted to the conditions in our country. This model was presented to the competent services and the representatives of the Plant Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management agreed on further development of that model, as well as on the inclusion of all the products within their competence in addition to fruit and vegetables. The business community contacted donors to enable further operationalization of the proposed model through its inclusion in the Plan of Official Import Controls, and then through the information system that is to be developed (in the first phase, food of plant and mixed origin, animal feed of plant origin, with an

emphasis on perishable goods). Time limits and obligations were defined both for the competent authorities and for the representatives of the USAID, AmCham, the World Bank. Efforts are currently made to fulfil the necessary preconditions, develop a single information system (bearing in mind the activities related to E-inspector and ITCM project as well).

All of the above mentioned should lead to establishing of a modern risk analysis model, which shall rank the shipments based on various parameters and/or based on the combination of risks, from the product type to the country of origin, producer, destination and importer.

**2. Alignment of competences of individual inspection authorities** has been achieved through the amendments to the following legal regulations:

- Law on Amendments to the Law on Food Safety, in March 2019 – legal basis has been provided for more specific defining of competencies of the relevant inspections;
- Rulebook on the Type of Food and Method for Conducting Official Controls and on the Lists of Mixed Food and Method for Conducting Controls of Such Food – April 2019 (defining of the competencies of inspections in more detail);
- Rulebook on Conditions for Shipments not Requiring Veterinary-sanitary Decisions for Import and/or Transit – June 2019 (expanded list of products not requiring decisions on veterinary and sanitary conditions for import and/or transit thereof);
- Rulebook on Determining the Monitoring Program for Safety of Imported Food of Animal Origin and Animal Feed for 2019 – June 2019;
- Plan of Official Controls for Imports of Food of Plant Origin, Mixed Food, Animal Feed of Plant Origin in 2019.

**3. Upgrading capacities of inspection services** is also among the necessary preconditions for the improvement of work and removal of administrative barriers.

A job competition is currently underway to fill the vacancies in all the three inspections (veterinary, phytosanitary and agricultural).

According to the Action Plan, an increase in the number of employees in 2020 and in 2021, which was adopted by the Government in 2019, has been planned with a view to improve the work of all the inspections. The number of employees will be increased in all the inspection services competent to carry out controls of agricultural and food products.

4. With the aim to improve the conditions for product marketing and to remove trade barriers in **2019, several agreements have been concluded**: with the UAE on veterinary cooperation; with China on import and export of foodstuff and food safety, dairy products and pig meat; with North Macedonia on phytosanitary cooperation, food safety and veterinary matters; with the Russian Federation in the field of plant quarantine and plant protection.

An initiative has been launched to conclude an agreement with Albania.

## **II – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE AND EQUAL MEASURES**

**Chairperson: Zoran Bakić**, Group Head, Ministry of Economy, Sector for Product Quality and Product Safety

1. Concerning the part of Action Plan activities relating to establishing an efficient risk analysis system, significant new developments have been achieved in the previous period, primarily by the market monitoring authority of the Ministry of Trade, Telecommunications and Tourism, and by the Customs Administration of the Ministry of Finance. On the other hand, it has been established that the acquiring of documents for importation of certain industrial non-food products is still mandatory, which is an obligation that has been assessed to present a barrier to trade and which has been applied based on the Decision on determining the goods for the import, export and/or transit of which acquiring of certain documents was prescribed. These restrictions present unnecessary obstacles and shall be included in the Action Plan for this Expert Working Group for the following period.

2. In the process of **harmonisation of domestic regulations with the EU acquis**, the Law on Construction Products has been passed, whereby the Regulation (EU) No 305/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2011 laying down harmonised conditions for marketing of construction products has been transposed, along with a number of by-laws (technical regulations). Additionally, the Law on Products of General Use and the Rulebook on Toy Safety were adopted. The only segment in which no progress has been made is the field of radio equipment, in which it is necessary to transpose the Radio Equipment Directive 2014/53/EU (RED) from 2014.

3. With regard to the reduction of delays in registration issuing for **new medicines and registration renewal, almost no progress has been achieved**. It is also necessary to point out to the low level of cooperation achieved with the competent institution in this field.

4. Further streamlining of procedures for acceptance of foreign certificates on conformity issued by the notified conformity assessment bodies (EU NANDO database) and EA MLA signatories, has led to signing of a concrete Memorandum of Understanding on Mutual Cooperation and Acceptance of Documents Issued by the Laboratories Accredited for Industrial Non-food Products with Bosnia and Herzegovina. The same Memorandum text was offered to the Republic of North Macedonia; that party, however, has not showed any interest in it. In addition to that, through their everyday activities, the Ministry of Economy and its **Sector for Product Quality and Safety are promoting possible benefits resulting from signing of the EA Multilateral Agreement** between the national accreditation body and the European Accreditation, along with the solutions from the Decree on the Manner of Recognition of Foreign Documents of Conformity and Conformity Marks (from 2016) whereby the objective from the fourth point of the Action Plan for this Expert Working Group has been achieved to its current maximum.

### **III – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON CUSTOMS PROCEDURES**

**Chairperson: Snežana Karanović**, Assistant to the Minister, Ministry of Finance

1. With regard to the reduction of time required for **issuing of binding tariff information on classification of goods (BTI)**, and bearing in mind that complete request and enclosed complete manufacturers' documentations are of substantial significance for the reduction of time required for BTIs issuing, the request form for BTIs issuing has been made available on the website of the Customs Administration/Services/Binding

Decisions, with an explanation and guidelines relating to the documentation that needs to be enclosed when submitting request. Database of the issued valid BTIs has also been made available for viewing on the same website.

2. The Customs Administration, in cooperation with the World Bank, has developed and implemented an E-ORIGIN IT Application and the accompanying **database**, starting from June 1, 2019, which is intended to facilitate communication with the business community. In this connection, the following has been enabled:

- **E-OOP**: Electronic submission, amendment and reviewing of requests for issuing of binding decisions on origin of goods - OOP, in accordance with Article 23 of the Customs Law, and

- **E-APPLICATION**: Electronic submission of applications for verification of knowledge of origin of goods within the procedure for acquiring the status of an Approved Exporter in accordance with the implementation of free trade agreements that envisage that.

Submission of requests and applications has been made available to all users, irrespective of their locations, and no specific hardware or installation process are required for the use of this IT Application. A standard web browser, preferably Google Chrome, is all that the users need. The IT Application has been successfully used for about 6 months now, and almost all companies are using only the new form of electronic communication and they get information on the status of their administrative case and/or on the date of exam for verification of knowledge within a very short period of time.

The effect of the above described is complete fulfilment of the plan for **Reduction of time required for OOP issuing**, since the application submission procedure and further communication are now carried out by electronic means, and all the OOPs are kept in electronic form through the new application and are available at any given moment to the users, through the simple access to the web application. Additionally, the introduction of the electronic service E-origin has resulted in facilitation and expediting of the process for acquiring the Approved Exporter status.

3. The activity related to processing of **electronically submitted customs declarations and carrying out of risk analysis before the arrival of express consignments**, with the aim of expediting of the customs procedure (the pre arrival processing) has been implemented through the adoption of the Customs Administration Explanation on simplified procedure for express consignments on November 1, 2018, whereby the pre arrival processing is envisaged.

4. Concerning the promotion and training of private sector regarding the use of simplified customs procedures and the status of an authorized economic operator which relates to enabling the option within the Customs Service not to request the same data from the holder of the Authorized Economic Operator status(AEO), **where such data has already been provided in a recent period; this has been made possible through the newly adopted Explanations of the Customs Administration for simplified import and export procedures, for importers and exporters, for customs representatives and in the simplified procedure with express consignments.**

Concerning the promotion and training of the private sector for the use of simplified customs procedures and the AEO status, in the part of this activity relating to preparation for recognition of the AEO status within CEFTA and PR China, and bearing in mind the complexity of the harmonisation process, as well as the fact that in December 2019 the Law on Ratification of Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on mutual recognition of approvals of Authorized Economic Operators (AEOS) for security and safety and the Decision of the Joint Committee of the CEFTA on establishing of validation procedure for mutual recognition of national AEOS programs were adopted, further work remains to be carried out on promotion and training of the private sector.

#### **IV – EXPERT WORKING GROUP ON COORDINATION OF TRADE FACILITATION ACTIVITIES IN THE FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS**

**Chairperson: Tatjana Dinkić**, Secretary of the NTFB, Head of the Group, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications

The following concrete obligations were fulfilled in 2019:

1. In October 2019, the **Memorandum of Mutual Cooperation of 9 departments relating to coordination and exchange of data on goods among border services on the national level and between the CEFTA Parties** was delivered to the CEFTA Secretariat. This Memorandum was the precondition for establishing of the system for electronic exchange of information on the movements of goods in the Region.

2. One of the specific obligations from the Additional Protocol 5 to the CEFTA Agreement pertained to the obligations of the regional administrations to deliver the Single list of fees and charges relating to import and export. With the aim of fulfilling this obligation, a table form of the Single list of fees and charges has been prepared based on inputs provided by all competent institutions. On **December 3, 2019, the NTFB submitted the Single List to CEFTA Secretariat for the purpose of its publication in the CEFTA Transparency Pack**. Bearing in mind that the Single List includes comprehensive information on permits, decisions, certificates, consents and certifications, as well as reasons for collection of charges, duties and fees, the competent authority and information on the payment time and method, this document is a useful source of information for all interested parties, particularly for the private sector. Of all the CEFTA Parties, Serbia has been the only one to submit this list.

3. Coordination of activities on conclusion of programs of Mutual Recognition of the Status of Authorized Economic Operators in compliance with the CEFTA Additional Protocol 5 was successfully completed by the Customs Administration and the Ministry of Finance, and in the meeting of the **CEFTA Joint Committee that took place in Tirana on December 18, 2019, the Decision on Mutual Recognition of AEOs was adopted. In the Special Meeting of the CEFTA Joint Committee on February 25, 2020 in Tivat, the Decision on Facilitation of Trade in Fruits and Vegetables No. 01/2020 was also adopted.**

4. Concerning the mutual recognition of documents to be submitted during importation and exportation, further efforts are needed to fulfil this objective in the CEFTA region, and therefore it has also been included in the Action Plan for the following period. The absence of mutual recognition for documents on the CEFTA level has been partially overcome by signing bilateral agreements with individual partners from this region, such as with North Macedonia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5. **With regard to the problem of barriers to freight transport at border crossing points with the EU**, a number of meetings were organized, intensive cooperation with the Coordination Body for borders was achieved and a number of measures were taken. In addition to that, in the meeting of the Sub-Committee on Trade, Industry, Customs and Taxation that took place on October 16, 2019, our side highlighted the issue of long delaying of freight vehicles at the border crossing points with Hungary and Croatia. This issue was included in the operational conclusions from the Sub-Committee meeting, and in relation to this, in the beginning of November 2019, a letter was addressed to the competent Directorate General (DG) of the European Commission. Complete

relevant information on this issue, which had been highlighted both by the competent institutions and by the private sector, was presented in this letter, along with a proposed solution. On March 4, 2020 in Brussels, the NTFB Secretary drew attention of the DG NEAR and DG TRADE representatives to this issue again, and specifically explained the scope of this problem not only for Serbia, but for the entire region as well. Although several meetings were organized among different departments competent for this issue, both on the bilateral and on the regional levels, no significant progress has been made so far, and the situation has been additionally aggravated with the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemics. Due to this, activities on setting up of special “green lanes” on border crossings for keeping essential transport flows moving (for food, medicines, medical equipment) have been initiated towards the EU on the CEFTA level.

7. In 2019, activities continued on the study on Regulatory and Procedural Barriers to Trade in the Republic of Serbia which has been carried out by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Coordination of answers to questions from the UNECE Questionnaire relating to the field of quality infrastructure was completed and the completed questionnaire was forwarded to the UNECE Secretariat. According to the plan, following the processing of the answers provided by competent departments, the UNECE Secretariat should present the draft study in the beginning of May 2020; after that, in June 2020, complete study should be presented and published.

## **2.2. Action Plans of Expert Working Groups for 2020-2021**

In the fifth NTFB meeting that was organized on December 27, 2019, Action Plans for the following two years, i.e. for the period 2020-2021 were adopted. The new Action Plans were drawn up in close cooperation with the representatives of the business community. The format of the Action Plans was modified and improved, so that it now comprises of a tabular presentation of planned activities, measures, competent institutions, as well as of the results’ indicators. **The complete presentation of the Action Plans for 2020-2021 is provided in Annex 1 to this Report.**

## **3. MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY**

### **3.1. Meetings of the National Coordination Body**

The fourth meeting of the NTFB took place on July 2, 2019 in Belgrade, with the following agenda:

- 1) Report on activities conducted by the Expert Working Groups relating to the fulfilling of obligations comprised in Action Plans for 2018 and 2019 and future plans;
- 2) Cooperation with the Coordination Body for border crossings in the Republic of Serbia concerning the initiative of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce to provide conditions for faster flow of freight motor vehicles on border crossings with Croatia and Hungary;
- 3) Analysis of results achieved and of the remaining open issues relating to the removal of barriers in mutual trade with Bosnia and Herzegovina and Northern Macedonia – current situation relating to conclusion of agreements which are being negotiated;
- 4) Other issues.

The fifth NTFB meeting took place on December 27, 2019 in Belgrade, with the following agenda:

1. Report on activities conducted by the Expert Working Groups relating to the fulfilling of obligations comprised in the Action Plans for 2018 and 2019;
2. Defining the new Action Plans of the Expert Working Groups for 2020 and 2021;



3. Adoption of the amended Decision on Establishing the Expert Working Groups of the NTFB;
4. Other issues.

Detailed information relating to the above listed agenda items from both meetings were explained in detail and presented in the narrative part of this Report in point 2.1.

### **3.2. Meetings of the Expert Working Groups of the National Coordination Body**

#### **I Expert Working Group on Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures**

The third meeting of the Expert Working Group for Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures took place on September 27, 2019 in Belgrade. The agenda of the meeting covered further activities on implementation of the NTFB Action Plan for 2018 and 2019. The Expert Working Group members who were present in the meeting participated in discussions relating to concrete activities that needed to be taken with the aim of fulfilling the obligations from the Action Plan.

#### **II Expert Working Group on Technical Barriers to Trade and Equivalent Measures**

The second meeting of the Expert Working Group on Technical Barriers to Trade and Equivalent Measures took place on December 17, 2019 in Belgrade, in the premises of the AmCham. The agenda for the meeting covered the analysis of the achievements made within the activities envisaged in the Action Plan for the Expert Working Group for 2018 and 2019, as well as defining the activities from the previously adopted plans that would be transferred to the new Action Plans (for 2020-2021) and those that would be specified as completely new priority activities.

#### **III Expert Working Group on Customs Procedures**

This Working Group carried out their activities within the framework of the seminars and meetings for the business community, which were primarily organized with regard to acquiring of the status of **Authorized Economic Operators** (AEO) and the improvement of the customs procedure for **express consignments**.

#### **IV Expert Working Group on Coordination of Trade Facilitation Activities under International and Regional Trade Agreements**

This Working Group carried out their activities through coordination by electronic mail and formal letters addressed to the competent institutions relating to various processes on the international level. This primarily implied filling out of questionnaires and providing answers to requests of the international organisations in the field of trade facilitation. Direct result of these activities came in the form of positive assessments of the progress made in Serbia in the field of trade facilitation, which were primarily presented in the Annual Report of the European Commission within Chapter 30 (External Relations), as well as in the UN and WB documents.

## **4. ACTIVITIES RELATING TO TRADE FACILITATION AND BARRIER REMOVAL**

#### **4.1. Legislative Activities**

- Law on Ratification of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on establishing of joint controls on the border crossing point for international road transport of Preševo (Republic of Serbia) – Tabanovce (Republic of North Macedonia) (“Official Gazette of the RS – International Treaties”, number 8/2019)
- Law on Amendments to the Law on Food Safety, (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 17/2019)
- Law on Safety of Products of General Use, (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 25/2019)
- Law on Ratification of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Government of the Republic of North Macedonia on Mutual Recognition of Approvals of Authorised Economic Operators for Safety and Security (“Official Gazette of the RS – International Treaties”, number 16/2019)
- Agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of North Macedonia on Phytosanitary Cooperation (“Official Gazette of the RS – International Treaties”, number 12/2019)
- Agreement between the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management of the Republic of Serbia and the Food and Veterinary Agency of the Republic of North Macedonia in the Field of Food Safety and Veterinary Policy (“Official Gazette of the RS – International Treaties”, number 14/2019)
- Rulebook on the Type of Food and Method of Official Controls, as well as on the List of Mixed Food and Method of Controlling of Such Food (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 29/2019)
- Rulebook on Conditions for Consignments not Requiring Special Veterinary Sanitary Decision for Import and/or Transit (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 39/2019)
- Rulebook on Determining of the Monitoring Program for the Safety of Food of Animal Origin and Animal Feed Imported for 2019 (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 39/2019)
- Plan of Official Controls of Imports of Food of Plant Origin, Mixed Food, Animal Feed of Plant Origin for 2019 (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 39/2019)
- Rulebook on Toys Safety (“Official Gazette of the RS”, number 78/2019)
- Decision of the CEFTA Joint Committee on Mutual Recognition of AEOs, number 01/2019
- Decision of the CEFTA Joint Committee on Facilitation of Trade in Fruits and Vegetables, number 01/2020

#### **4.2. Other activities within the international organisations of the UN system, conferences and seminars**

On June 10-13, 2019, a visit to Stockholm and to the Swedish National Board of Trade, the most important institution within the system of the Swedish trade facilitation committee (SWEPRO) was organized by the IDEAS Centre from Geneva that is providing support to Serbia in the accession process to the WTO. The main objective of this visit was to get acquainted with the Swedish trade facilitation system with a special focus on

the consultation process and on the inclusion process of private sector in implementation of this policy. The Serbian delegation comprised of the NTFB representatives from the following institutions: the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management, Ministry of Economy and the Customs Administration, which are also the members of the Expert Working Groups within the NTFB.

A regional meeting was organized in Vienna on May 21-24, 2019, on trade facilitation and/or border services' performance measuring. The delegation of the Republic of Serbia comprised of the representatives of the Customs Administration, Veterinary Directorate and the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, who presented the results of the competent RS institutions in this field.

The German Organisation for international cooperation (GIZ) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) organized a meeting in Belgrade on May 29, 2019 as a part of the Project "Support to Trade Facilitation in CEFTA Region". The meeting was organized to present the study on quality diagnostics and business processes' analysis in relation to the barriers to trade in regional value chains of the iron and steel, as well as in the vegetable sectors. The representatives of this Project presented the draft analysis, conclusions and recommendations for resolving identified barriers in regional trade, and the present NTFB members provided specific comments and suggestions to improve the final version of the report.

Participation in the UNECE Steering Committee organized on May 28-29, 2019 in Geneva was achieved. The agenda for this meeting included, among other items, presentation of the basic findings that would be included in the UNECE study for strengthening of the national capacities for trade facilitation and elimination of regulatory barriers to trade in Serbia, which is being prepared in cooperation with the Secretariat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

Organized by the Customs Administration, on June 25 2019, a workshop took place during which the new IT application and electronic services for the origin of goods intended for the business community were presented, which were developed with the support from the International Financial Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank Group. The new IT application enabled to submit a request or an application, to monitor the status of the administrative case and to access the documents issued at any given moment, by electronic means, without being physically present in the Customs Administration and with the minimum of documentation required,. This resulted in facilitated and expedited procedures in this segment of customs operations for the business community.

Under the auspices of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) on March 4-5, 2020 in Brussels, the joint meeting of the WCO Trade Facilitation Agreement Working Group<sup>2</sup> (FTA) and Capacity Building Committee<sup>3</sup> was organized. In addition to the representatives of the customs and border services of the member states, the meeting was attended by the representatives of the Ministries of Trade, international organisations, private sector and scientific community as well. Within the agenda items relating to the individual national experiences from the work of the national trade facilitation committees, the NTFB Secretary pointed out to the progress made in Serbia in the previous year, which was recognized by both the UN and the World Bank.

## **5. PUBLIC PRESENTATION**

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<sup>2</sup> WCO Trade Facilitation Agreement Working Group - TFAWG.

<sup>3</sup> Capacity Building Committee - CBC.

Work of the National Coordination Body is public. Public character of the work is achieved by presenting the work of the National Coordination Body on the web portal, by making statements and public notices, as well as through the participation in conferences and other public events.

In relation to the above, the official web site of the NTFB has been made publicly available since December 2018, at the following internet address: <http://nktot.mtt.gov.rs/>.

Complete information relating to NTFB and Expert Working Groups' activities is available on the web site and the web site is regularly updated through the additions of latest information on the work of this body. The financial and organisational support for the work on this web site was provided by the USAID.

The structure of the NTFB web site which is available in two languages (in Serbian and in English) includes: the basic information on the NTFB, the legal framework, documents, meetings, Expert Working Groups, proposals and initiatives, regional cooperation, events and news, useful links and the contact page.

## **6. PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

In the following period, the work will focus on the fulfilment of obligations determined in the Action Plans for 2020 and 2021 for each individual expert working group. Special activities will be focused on the obligations arising from the implementation of the Additional Protocol 5 to CEFTA, and additional further activities have been planned in cooperation with donors and international organisations on implementation of WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, as well as on fulfilment of other obligations undertaken within the regional and bilateral agreements.

COVID 19 pandemic will present a substantial challenge and uncertainty for successful realisation of the Action Plans in the following period, particularly if we bear in mind that movements of people have been completely restricted due to the spreading of this virus, and that movement of goods, which has already been burdened with additional checks and suspensions since the outbreak of the migrant crisis, has also been additionally made difficult, particularly on the border crossing points with the EU.

It is necessary to strengthen the capacity within the NTFB, bearing in mind in particular that this is an additional activity and engagement for all the members, chairpersons of the working groups, as well as the for the representatives of the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications who are carrying out the work of the NTFB Secretariat, in addition to their regular obligations and tasks.

## **Annex 1 - ACTION PLAN OF THE NATIONAL TRADE FACILITATION BODY FOR 2020 and 2021**

### **I –EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR AGRICULTURE, SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY MEASURES**

**Chair: Milanka Davidovic**, Head of Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management

The Expert Working Group on Agriculture, Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures deals with issues and proposes initiatives that contribute to the promotion and facilitation of foreign trade in agricultural and food products. Within the matters considered and proposed, the expert working group aims at ensuring that veterinary, sanitary and phytosanitary measures related to foreign trade in agricultural and food products are adopted and applied only to the extent necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health and in a manner that does not constitute barriers in trade.

Number	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
1.	Reducing the duration of import procedures for agricultural and food products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable electronic filing of requests for goods control and supporting documentation in order to improve import risk analysis</li> <li>• When sampling goods during the import, allow a random selection of authorized laboratories that can perform analyzes for all required parameters and are geographically closer, in order to shorten the time needed to obtain the results of analysis</li> <li>• Ensure effective electronic</li> </ul>	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Health, authorized accredited laboratories	<p>Assessment of the progress of Serbia on the basis of the Report of the European Commission and other relevant international organizations</p> <p><i>Online</i> modules for electronic submission of</p>

Number	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>communication between laboratories and competent inspectorates regarding sampling of goods and submitting the results of analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish on the website of the ministry responsible for agriculture or health updated lists of authorized laboratories according to the types of accredited analysis carried out</li> <li>• Establish an effective mechanism for supervision and control of authorized laboratories with the possibility to revoke authorization due to malpractice</li> <li>• Acceptance of test results from EU accredited laboratories and/or from countries with which agreements have been signed which, <i>inter alia</i>, regulate the acceptance of laboratory test results; publicize the list of these laboratories along with accredited methods on the Internet page of the ministry responsible for agriculture or health</li> </ul>		<p>requests for control and exchange of results of analysis with laboratories</p> <p>Number of signed and implemented agreements on recognition of laboratory test results</p> <p><i>Online</i> publication of the list of laboratories and accredited methods</p>
2.	Establishing an effective risk analysis system for control of goods by all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and implementation of risk analysis models during import of goods based on European practice (taking into account the risk of the entity in terms of</li> </ul>	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water	Assessment of the progress of Serbia on the basis of the Report

Number	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
	inspection authorities in order to reduce barriers and facilitate import and export	<p>conformity of goods with the prescribed requirements, good business practices and developed internal procedures for quality control)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform analysis of the existing regulations and, if possible, identify measures and activities that would allow the application of risk analysis during control of agricultural and food products to GMO presence and radioactivity.</li> <li>• Develop and implement plans for official controls based on risk analysis</li> <li>• Develop internal rulebook for the conduct of inspectors</li> <li>• Assess the options available for introduction of IT tools for risk analysis and management when conducting border controls of goods and development of those tools</li> <li>• Training of inspectors on the use of risk analysis tools and implementation of official control plans based on risk analysis</li> </ul>	<p>Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Health,  Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self- Government (e- Inspector), Office for Information Technology and Electronic Governance</p>	<p>of the European Commission and other relevant international organizations</p> <p>Approved official plans of control based on risk assessment</p> <p>Number of organized training courses on the topic of risk analysis and number of participants</p> <p>Report on application of e-inspector</p>
3.	Reducing the volume of required documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand the list of products for which mandatory decision on the fulfillment of</li> </ul>	Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry	Amendments to the relevant regulations

Number	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
	and formalities in import, export and transit	<p>the veterinary and sanitary requirements for import and transit is not required, or completely abolish these decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct the analysis of the existing regulations and, if possible, harmonize current practices with applicable regulations in such a way that a mandatory decision on the fulfillment of veterinary and sanitary conditions for import and transit is not applied to samples of product</li> <li>• Improve the implementation of international agreements affecting the marketing of agricultural and food products</li> </ul>	<p>and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate</p>	<p>and/or internal operational instructions (Veterinary Law and/or Rulebook on Conditions for Shipments for which Decision on Import or Transit is Not Required)</p>
4.	Implementation of programs of harmonization and mutual recognition of documents and other trade facilitation initiatives for agricultural and food products, stipulated by Additional Protocol 5 to the CEFTA 2006 Agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in the work of the competent bodies of CEFTA in order to reach an agreement on harmonization and mutual recognition of documents in trade of agricultural and food products</li> <li>• Carrying out activities in relation to facilitation of trade in fruits and vegetables under the CEFTA 2006 Agreement</li> </ul>	<p>Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate and Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Health</p>	<p>Positive assessment of the CEFTA Sub-Committee on Trade Facilitation</p> <p>Trade growth in the region</p>



## II EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR TECHNICAL BARRIERS AND MEASURES WITH EQUAL EFFECTS IN TRADE

**Chair: Zoran Bakic, Head of Group, Ministry of Economy, Sector for Product Quality and Safety**

The Expert Working Group on Technical Barriers and Measures with Equal Effects in Trade deals with issues and proposes initiatives that contribute to the promotion and facilitation of foreign trade in industrial (non-food) products (including, among others, cosmetic products and other items for general use, medicines, medical devices, chemicals, mechanical and technical products of various kinds, toys, etc.). Within the matters and the initiatives considered, the expert working group shall ensure that technical regulations, standards and conformity assessment procedures are enacted and implemented without constituting unnecessary obstacles to trade.

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
1.	<b>Develop the analysis</b> of the practice in the region regarding compulsory submission of conformity certificates at the time of import customs clearance with the aim to completely eliminate this type of control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparation of lists, product groups and required documents of conformity by competent authorities with the indication in which countries of the region or the EU such practice exists, and the reasons for obtaining such documents during import customs clearance</li><li>• With the involvement of the competent institutions and the private sector, the WG will conduct the analysis and develop the set of recommendations in order to reduce the number of products for which conformity documents are required at the time of import customs clearance</li></ul>	Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Mining and Energy, Ministry of Health, Customs Administration	Reduced volume of certain Annexes to the Decision on determining the goods which require certain documents for import, export or transit

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Updating of the Decision on determining the goods which require certain documents for import, export or transit - Implementation of recommendations</li> </ul>		
2.	Establishing an <b>efficient system of risk analysis by the Sanitary Inspection</b> in order to reduce barriers and facilitate import for companies with: good business practices, goods that comply with regulatory requirements, and developed internal procedures for safety and quality controls;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of the applicability of the available import risk analysis models (<i>e.g. model developed under WG1 for the import of products with short shelf life etc.</i>) to the Sanitary Inspection portfolio in the field of industrial non-food products</li> <li>Identification of the criteria for risk analysis and needs assessment</li> <li>Development of the plan for implementation of risk analysis in the process of import control of goods with necessary resources (financial, personnel, IT, etc.).</li> <li>Adoption and application of measures necessary for implementation of risk analysis</li> </ul>	Ministry of Health Sanitary Inspection	Functional risk assessment at the arrival of each consignment at the border, and decision on sampling on the basis of risk assessment
3.	<b>Furtherharmonization of technical regulations with the</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of the complete list of Serbian standards (EU list) in the area of construction products, that is, the list of standards that will</li> </ul>	Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure	List of standards as prescribed by the Law on Construction Products

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
	<b>EU legislation</b>	accompany the legal act on construction products		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the domain of products of general use - adoption and regular updating of regulations in line with changes to the EU legislation, in particular:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drafting of the by-laws for materials and objects in contact with food, in accordance with the EU legislation</li> <li>- Drafting of the by-laws regulating the regime for tobacco products and accessories, in accordance with the EU legislation</li> <li>- Drafting of by-laws regulating the import regime of detergents, biocides, etc. in accordance with the EU legislation</li> <li>- WG to participate in the public debate, or provide opinion on drafts of these acts (taking into account the EU legislation and the examples of good practice)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		Sanitary Inspection, Ministry of Health	Regulations adopted pursuant to the Law on Items of General Use	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revoking the obligation to obtain a certificate of conformity issued by the designated conformity assessment body in the field of low voltage electrical equipment,</li> </ul>		Ministry of Economy	Amended Regulations (Rulebook on Electrical Equipment Intended for Use within Certain Voltage Limits,	

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>electromagnetic compatibility and machinery (LVD, EMC and MD)</p>		<p>Rulebook on Electromagnetic Compatibility, Rulebook on Machine Safety)</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transposition of the new EU Directive on Radio Devices (RED), prompt publication of the list of Serbian standards in the field of radio equipment (and telecommunication terminal equipment), revision of the validity period of the certificate of conformity, with the aim of abolishing it.</li> <li>• Development of the Instructions / Guide / Interpretation for the Customs Administration, Market Inspectorate and designated conformity assessment bodies regarding the validity of certificates of conformity and training of competent officials and the private sector</li> </ul>	<p>Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, Designated Conformity Assessment Body RATEL, Market Inspection, Designated Conformity Assessment Bodies, Ministry of Economy</p>	<p>Amended regulations and publication of the Rulebook on Radio Equipment (withdrawal of the Rulebook on Radio and Telecommunications Terminal Equipment)</p> <p>Published updated list of Serbian standards in the field of radio equipment (and telecommunication terminal equipment)</p> <p>Instructions/Guide/Interpretation for the Customs Administration, Market Inspectorate and designated conformity assessment bodies and commercial entities regarding</p>

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
				the validity of certificates of conformity
4.	Eliminate delays in the registration of new medicines, renewal of registration and approval of promotional material, in accordance with the legal deadline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Modification of regulations in the field of permanent licenses</b> – enable issuing of licenses for medicines that are registered on the market under the old rulebooks, in accordance with the EU regulations</li> <li>• <b>Significant simplification of the procedure for medicines authorized for trade in the entire territory of the EU</b></li> <li>• Modification of the regulations related to <b>promotional material</b> - following the example of good practice from the EU, prescribe the obligation of prior approval only for the promotional material intended for lay audiences, while promotional material for professional audiences would be issued on the basis of the rulebook without prior approval, but with the possibility of subsequent control by inspections</li> <li>• Preparation of the annual reports of the Medicines and Medical Devices</li> </ul>	Medicines and Medical Devices Agency of Serbia Ministry of Health	<p>Issuing of registration for new medicines, and renewal of registration within legal deadline</p> <p>Simplified procedure for promotional materials</p> <p>Annual report with a positive assessment regarding the elimination or reduction of delays</p> <p>Analysis of the amount of tariffs in terms of the cost of the service provided</p>

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>Agency of Serbia on the time necessary for resolving individual requests for registration, renewal and issuance of promotional materials indicating whether there were breaches of legal deadlines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of the amount of administrative tariffs of the Medicines and Medical Devices Agency of Serbia (with the help of donor projects and suggestions of member business associations)</li> </ul>		
5.	<b>Acceptance of foreign certificates of conformity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further promotion of the procedure for the recognition of foreign documents of conformity, in particular issued by notified conformity assessment bodies (notified conformity assessment bodies from the NANDO EU database), as well as accepting documents issued by accredited designated conformity assessment bodies from countries signatories of EA MLA (Multilateral Agreement on European Accreditation on Mutual Recognition, signed by the national accreditation bodies of an EA Member), when such a document confirms conformity with an EU</li> </ul>	Member Institutions of the National Trade Facilitation Body, Market Inspection, Designated Conformity Assessment Bodies, Accredited Laboratories, Commercial Entities	<p>Number of concluded agreements/memoranda on acceptance of foreign documents of conformity</p> <p>Brochures published</p> <p>Number of trainings held and number of participants attending the trainings</p>

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>technical regulation transposed in the Republic of Serbia for the purpose of placing goods on the market in the Republic of Serbia through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Signing of international agreements / memoranda on cooperation and acceptance of documents issued by accredited laboratories</li> <li>-Development of brochures and organization of trainings for all interested parties on the topic of acceptance of foreign certificates of conformity or test results, as well as regarding the legal possibility of drafting and issuing appropriate national documents of conformity for the product concerned <b>without re-conducting the conformity assessment</b>, with possible support from the civil sector (projects, organizations, associations, etc.)</li> </ul>		

### III – EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

**Chair: Snezana Karanovic**, Acting Assistant Minister, Ministry of Finance

The Expert Working Group for Customs Procedures deals with issues and proposes initiatives designed to enhance and facilitate customs procedures, broader application of simplified customs procedures for import, export and transit of goods, harmonization and increase of predictability in actions of customs authorities.

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
1.	Mutual recognition and promotion of Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of the Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Authorized Economic Operators for Safety and Security (AEOS) with North Macedonia                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of protocols for validation of mutual recognition of AEOS</li> <li>- Implementation of the validation procedure in order to confirm equivalence of the legislation and implementation of the AEO programs of the signatory states</li> <li>- Establishing mandatory exchange of information regarding the AEOS through the SEED system</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Preparatory activities for the purpose of conclusion of agreements on mutual recognition of AEO programs with the PR China and/or other</li> </ul>	Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance	<p>Signed protocol for validation of mutual recognition of AEOS with North Macedonia</p> <p>Expedited flow of goods and reduced retention time of cargo vehicles at border crossings with North Macedonia for AEOS status holders</p> <p>Number of concluded agreements on mutual</p>



	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>countries where there is an economic interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and protection of the logo for the national program of the authorized economic operators</li> <li>• Further promotion and training of the private sector with regard to the procedure for obtaining the status of authorized economic operator, benefits for status holders, as well as concluded mutual recognition agreements</li> </ul>		<p>recognition of AEO programs</p> <p>Number of trainings and events held on the topic of authorized economic operators and number of participants attending the trainings</p>
2.	Acceleration of flow of goods at the Preševco-Tabanovce border crossing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of a separate entry and exit lane for cargo vehicles in TIR and T1 (common transit) procedures, companies with AEO status, and for the transport of perishable goods</li> </ul>	Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance, Member Institutions of the National Trade Facilitation Body, Coordination Body for Border Crossings	<p>Accelerated flow of goods at the border and reduced retention time of trucks at border crossings</p> <p>(progress verification mechanism based on the Time Release Study and the World Bank's <i>Doing Business</i> List, <i>Trading Across Border Indicator</i>)</p>

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
3.	Improve the auction process for the sale of customs goods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of an electronic auction system for sale of goods confiscated by a final decision in a customs misdemeanor procedure or goods waived by a party for the benefit of the State</li> <li>- Development of IT tools for conducting electronic auctions</li> <li>- Development of instructions and/or guidelines for conducting electronic auctions</li> <li>- Informing the public about the electronic auction system</li> </ul>	Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance	The number of successfully completed electronic auctions for the sale of goods and the revenue generated from electronic auctions
4.	Information technology connection between the Plant Protection Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and the Customs Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of an <i>on-line</i> electronic filing system for inspection by the Border Phytosanitary Inspection;</li> <li>Defining a set of data to be shared between the Customs Administration and the Plant Protection Directorate;</li> <li>Establishment of an <i>on-line</i> information exchange system between the Plant Protection Directorate and the Customs Administration;</li> <li>Training of the officials from the Customs Administration, Plant Protection Directorate, as well as the private sector on new electronic tools</li> </ul>	Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance  Plant Protection Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management	<i>On-line</i> electronic filing system available  Defined data set to be exchanged  <i>On-line</i> data exchange system available  Reduction of the average time required to issue the documents by the Plant Protection Directorate , as well as the time required to complete customs

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
				procedure for those goods
5.	Information technology connection between the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security and the Customs Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining the data set to be submitted to the Customs Administration by the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security;</li> <li>• Establishment of the system for <i>on-line</i> connection between the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security and the Customs Administration;</li> <li>• Training of the officials of the Customs Administration and the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security on new electronic tools</li> </ul>	<p>Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</p> <p>Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security</p>	<p>Defined data set to be exchanged</p> <p><i>On-line</i> system for the electronic data exchange available</p> <p>Reduction of the average time required for the document from the Directorate for Radiation and Nuclear Safety and Security to be available to participants in foreign</p>

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
				trade, as well as the time required to complete customs procedure for those goods
6.	<p>Information technology connection of the Customs Administration with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Veterinary Directorate of the Ministry of Agriculture Forestry and Water Management; and</li> <li>• Border Sanitary Inspection, Ministry of Health (up to the level defined by the Customs Administration)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining the data set to be submitted to the Customs Administration by the Veterinary Directorate and Sanitary Inspection;</li> <li>• Establishing of the system for <i>on-line</i> connection</li> <li>• Training of the officers of the Customs Administration and the Veterinary Directorate and Sanitary Inspection</li> </ul>	<p>Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</p> <p>Veterinary Directorate, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management</p> <p>Sanitary Inspection, Ministry of Health</p>	<p><i>On-line</i> system for electronic filing of requests available</p> <p>Defined data set to be exchanged</p> <p><i>On-line</i> electronic filing system available</p> <p>Reduction of the average time required for issuing of documents by the Veterinary Directorate and Sanitary Inspection, as well as the time required to complete customs procedure for these goods</p>
7.	Implementation of the Time Release Study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of a mandatory procedure for measuring the time required for customs clearance and release of goods (<i>Time Release Study</i>) according to the methodology of the World</li> </ul>	Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Agriculture,	Publicized Time Release Study with results on average time required for

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>Customs Organization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establishing of the Working Group and defining the scope of the Time Release Study</li> <li>- Development of Time Release Study questionnaires</li> <li>- Implementation of the Time Release Study at selected locations and for defined customs procedures</li> <li>- Entry, electronic processing and analysis of data and generation of the report with results and recommendations for improvement of procedures carried out by competent authorities</li> <li>- Informing the public of the results of the Time Release Study and publication of the report</li> </ul>	<p>Forestry and Water Management - Veterinary Directorate, Plant Protection Directorate; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Internal Affairs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Border Police Directorate; Belgrade Airport; private sector representatives and terminal operators</li> </ul>	<p>customs clearance and release of goods and recommendations for improvement</p>
8.	Reducing the time required to issue binding tariff information decisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of a system for <i>on-line</i> electronic submission of requests for issuing binding tariff information decision, and mandatory supporting documents</li> <li>• Establishment of an electronic (<i>backend</i>) system for storing and processing of submitted requests for issuing binding tariff information decision, generation of final binding tariff information decision, reports and the like, with automatic monitoring of the status of requests and validity of</li> </ul>	<p>Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</p>	<p><i>On-line</i> system for electronic filing of requests for issuing binding tariff information decisions available</p> <p>Reduction of the average time required to issue a binding tariff information upon receipt of a complete</p>

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>decisions and the possibility of advanced search, sorting and exporting of data in all segments of the system, by all the case properties being stored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connecting the electronic backend system for processing requests and issuing binding tariff information decisions with the online electronic database of issued binding tariff information decisions, enabling automatic updating of the database of issued binding tariff information decisions</li> <li>• Training of the officials in the Customs Administration and the private sector on new electronic tools related to binding tariff information decisions</li> </ul>		request
9.	<p>Analysis of the current situation and undertaking of the measures and activities that will, enable electronic communication between commercial entities and the Payments Collection Department of the Customs Administration regarding collection of claims in relation to due customs duties, interest on late payments, repayment of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of an electronic registry office as needed</li> </ul> <p>If necessary, drafting the necessary forms for electronic communication on the stated grounds with commercial entities, with identification of the necessary security levels of such documents</p>	<p>Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance</p>	<p>Accelerated communication of commercial entities with the Payments Collection Department of the Customs Administration</p>

	<b>Planned activity</b>	<b>Measures for implementation of activities</b>	<b>Competent institutions</b>	<b>Result indicator</b>
	overpaid duties, re-entry of incorrect payments, warnings for settlement of customs debt and communication with the guarantor bank			

#### **IV – EXPERT WORKING GROUP FOR COORDINATION OF TRADE FACILITATION ACTIVITIES UNDER INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS**

**Chair: Tatjana Dinkic**, Head of Group, Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications

The Expert Working Group for Coordination of Trade Facilitation Activities under International and Regional Trade Agreements provides support to the structures envisaged by these agreements for coordination and prioritization of trade facilitation activities at the national level , with the goal to comply with good international and regional practices and to reduce the costs incurred by the private sector due to inefficient procedures.

	<b>Planned activity</b>	<b>Measures for implementation of activities</b>	<b>Competent institutions</b>	<b>Result indicator</b>
<b>1.</b>	Coordination and monitoring of implementation of commitments in the field of trade facilitation arising from the free trade agreements and cooperation with international organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring implementation of free trade agreements in the context of trade facilitation, specifically in relation to the SAA, CEFTA, EFTA, EEA and Turkey</li> <li>• Coordination of the preparation of notifications under the CEFTA Additional Protocol 5</li> <li>• Participation in the WTO negotiations related to the WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation and drafting of notifications according to the dynamics of Serbia's accession to this organization</li> </ul>	Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation - MTT Member Institutions of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation	Assessment of Serbia's progress on the basis of the European Commission Report and reports of other relevant international organizations, including independent studies on compliance with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement - UN Global Review on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation and / or the World Bank's Tracking Tool
<b>2.</b>	Acceleration of the flow of goods at border crossings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation with the Border Crossings Coordination Body</li> </ul>	National Coordination Body for Trade	Accelerated flow of goods at the border and reduced retention time of trucks at



	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
	through integrated border management, harmonization of working hours of border agencies and improvement of the infrastructure	<p>in order to resolve the problem of long retention of trucks at border crossings with Hungary and Croatia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation with the competent European Commission Directorate in order to secure more active role of the EU in resolving this problem,</li> <li>• Cooperation with the competent institutions of the CEFTA parties</li> </ul>	Facilitation, Border Crossings Coordination Body, Serbian - Hungarian Joint Border Control Commission; Working Group on Infrastructure Extension at the Horgos Border Crossing	border crossings  (progress verification mechanism based on the Time Release Study and <i>Trading Across Border Indicator</i> of the World Bank's <i>Doing Business</i> List)
3.	Coordinating preparation of the Program of Mutual Recognition of documents submitted when importing and exporting goods stipulated by the Additional Protocol 5 of the CEFTA 2006 Agreement, as well as other trade facilitation initiatives under CEFTA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuation of work within the competent authorities of CEFTA on reaching the regional agreement on mutual recognition of documents</li> <li>• Monitoring implementation of agreed programs (mutual recognition of AEO program, joint risk management and development of risk profiles)</li> <li>• Monitoring implementation of the Decision on Facilitating Trade in Fruit and Vegetables</li> </ul>	Member Institutions of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation	Positive assessment of the CEFTA Subcommittee on Trade Facilitation  Trade growth in the region

	Planned activity	Measures for implementation of activities	Competent institutions	Result indicator
		<p>in the CEFTA region</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination of activities with regard to the possible extension of the scope of the Decision on Facilitating Trade in Fruits and Vegetables to all agricultural products</li> </ul>		
4.	Establishing cooperation with the Committees on Trade Facilitation at bilateral and multilateral levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of joint activities, conferences, seminars for the purpose of experience sharing</li> </ul>	Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation - MTTT	Annual Report of the Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation Body with indicators on the number of joint activities implemented
5.	Coordination of the preparation of responses to trade facilitation research inquiries conducted by international organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of responses to the questionnaires and surveys of international institutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UN Global Survey on Digital and Sustainable Trade Facilitation</li> <li>- Other questionnaires (UNCTAD, UNECE, World Bank)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation - MTTT/Member Institutions of the National Trade Facilitation Body	Assessment of Serbia's progress on the basis of the reports of relevant international organizations
6.	Informing the public and business representatives about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization of seminars, roundtables and conferences for representatives of the</li> </ul>	Secretariat of the National Coordination Body for	Number of activities held and number of participants at seminars and

	<b>Planned activity</b>	<b>Measures for implementation of activities</b>	<b>Competent institutions</b>	<b>Result indicator</b>
	the implementation of unilateral trade facilitation measures as well as those arising from the international agreements	<p>business community and administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in workshops organized by international organizations</li> <li>• Regular updating of the website of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation -in order to inform interested and professional public in a timely and accurate manner in accordance with the principles of transparency and availability of information</li> <li>• Ensuring donor support for implementation of these activities</li> </ul>	<p>Trade Facilitation - MTTT/Member</p> <p>Institutions of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation -</p>	<p>workshops</p> <p>The number of new posts on the website of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation and the increase in the number of visitors of the website of the National Coordination Body for Trade Facilitation</p>